# Selected Storn.

Mary Ann's New Year.

"Say! Mis' Barber! wish't ye happy New Year!" called out a passing boy. "You g'long!" answered the vexed woman, who stood in her shed door, just

about to hang out a basket of clothes on the old, sagging line.

"He! he! Wish ye happy New Year,
Mar' Ann!" echoed a maudlin voice from the yard, where a shabby, red-

eyed man sat on the end of a woodpile smoking a short, dirty pipe.

"Happy New Year!" Mary Ann's eyes flashed a she spoke.

"Twould be happy, sure enough, if I see your

cold corpse fetched into the door for my New Year's present!"

Joe gave a drunken laugh.

"Now Mar' Ann! don't ye, now,
Why, how you talk!"

"Talk! Well, if I didn't do nothin'

but talk, like you, where'd you be today, and the children? I'm glad the' isn't but two of 'em left!" And the bright gray eyes, full of

righteous indignation, grew dim as she "You've got suthin' to be happy

bout, then, ha'n't ye?" said Joe, with Mary Ann's eyes kindled again.

"You get up and chop that wood, Joe Barber; or you won't have a speck of dinner to-day, now I tell ye!"

She hung her clothes out in the slowgathering mist, watching the reluctant man's feeble strokes out of the corner of her eye as she did so, and when the few poor garments were all pinned up retreated into the kitchen, and, dropping on to the nearest chair, threw her apron over her head in a sort of despair. Through the darkness of that homely screen, with closed eyes, she looked backward on her life. She saw the comfortable farm-house that was her home long before she knew Joe Barber; the tender mother, the kind, silent father, the bright, merry brothers and sisters; the feast-days and the birth-days always kept there in plenty and mirth unusual among New England farmers, for the Blairs were a remarkably affectionate family, and their mother had a heart full of love and cheer that expended itself on her home with lavish effusion. There she had never known want or care; there was enough for every one's health and comfort under John Blair's roof. The great troubles of life had at last assailed them-death and separation-but never had there been a dissension among them, and if now she looked back sadly on the loss of parents and sister, she had no remorse in her

grief. Annie had died soon after her early marriage. Tim was at the world's end almost, in South America; John in the Sandwich Islands, and Becky lived in California; she, Mary Ann, was right here in Connecticut, in a miserable old house at Brimfield Center, with a drunken husband and two ragged children. "Oh, the pity of it!" when she promised to marry Joe Barber he was, as she phrased it to herself, "a real likely young man." He was stage-driver from Brimfield Center to Poquonock, and a hale, handsome young fellow, with a merry bright eye and a hearty laugh.

The stage was one of the last that ran in Connecticut, but before the Poquonock railway was built the mails and a few passengers had to be transported to three or four villages lying up among the West Hills, and therefore the route was kept up. It was a long thirty miles, that day's drive, up and down hill all the way, going up one day and back the next. The winters were cold, the winds piercing, the drive tire-some, and Joe could not resist a " nip," as he called it, of hot sling on very bitter days when he stopped at the Yantic tavern or threw off his mail-bag at Pekin. He rarely ever got drunk, but he made the first fatal step toward intemperance-he got to like the taste of liquor. Then, when the railway threaded the Poquonock valley he took to "teaming" freight from the great cotton mills to the station, and when winter set in that was cold work and the "nips" began again. Mary Ann did all she could to make him a better man, but he had the habit fixed on him before she knew it. And she was con-demned to see him fall lower and lower, till he became a hanger-on at corner groceries and she had to work as bard as she could to keep him and the children fed and clothed. Once it had been his pride to see her well-dressed and rosy; now he did not care that she was thin, pale and worn out. One by one her younger children had dropped into the grave, and she could not mourn them. She knew they were better off

Mary Ann had a great, generous heart and a loving nature; she was intelligent and energetic, but she had a quick temper and a keen sense of justice, and she had outgrown, as she thought, every bit of affection she had ever had for this shiftless, careless, useless man, whose sole end in life seemed to be to drink and eat at her expense and evade every duty he should have fulfilled. It was this hot temper that made her say a great many things a calmer woman would have thought, and repent them almost as soon as they were uttered. Now, as she sat there looking back on the past, she remembered also what Joe had been; how much she had once loved him; how handsome and kind and gay he was before this devil of drink entered into him, and a great wave of pity surged over her for a minute-only a minute, for she heard the gate click, and, pulling down her apron, she hurried to the window and saw her husband, with both hands in his pockets and his ragged coat pulled up about his ears, shambling away through the chill wintry drizzle to the corner grocery after his dram—the dram she should pay for with weariness of body and torture of soul. She shook her clenched fist at the retreating figure.

than with her; she kept a spark of

faith alive for that comfort.

"Oh! how I wish you'd never come back!" she said, with a fresh burst of rage, and then, going out into the tumble-down woodshed, she picked up the axe her husband had left lying on the ground and split up wood enough to boil her kettle of potatoes and bit of salt pork. The children should have a warm dinner when they came from the mill. They were delicate children—delicate from mere poverty, want of

warmth and food-but they had to work Children of a drunkard have to help

themselves-and him, too. As for Joe, he dragged himself along through the cold rain toward the place where his beloved drink was to be found, when suddenly his eye lit on a piece of money lying close to the walk; t was only a silver quarter, 'at it meant much to him. 'Squire Grove meant much to him. would never let him have but one drink at a time now that he could not pay cash for the stuff, but had it charge on Mary Ann's store bill; to-day be would get that glass first and then spend his quarter for more. So he got very drunk indeed; and, baving just sense enough left to keep away from home, turned toward the brick-kiln across Mad Brook, knowing he could lie down by its warm walls and sleep

The brook was up to its brim now with December's rains; the foot-bridge was narrow; it seemed very crooked to Joe as he stepped on it; he tried to follow those odd curves—and in one mo-ment he was deep in the water. Then he, too, looked back at the past; that strange revelation of the foregoing life that comes to the drowning man came to him. He remembered all that ever he had done, from stealing apples out of the neighbor's lot when he was four years old, and the sound whipping his mother gave him, down to his carouse to-day; he saw himself as he had beena young man with health, work, contentment, a loving wife, pretty dren, and then a drunken scoundrel, the scorn and contempt of that wornout woman and a terror to his pale, pinched, half-clothed boy and girl. Suddenly a text he had once read flashed across his mind-for once, in those forever-gone days, he used to read the

"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of death got hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver

Feebly he said, "O Lord! I-" then

everything went. About two hours after Mary Ann had gone out to split wood she heard the gate click again; the factory bell had not rung; probably Joe had stag-gered home drunk, as usual. She did not look up from her work till the door was flung open and four men brought in her husband's body.

The first thing she thought of was her morning's wish; God had granted The next was that here lay her She did not believe hours ago that she cared for him a particle; she knew now that she loved him still.

But, New England fashion, she made no sign; she only looked at the foremost of his bearers, and said, "Is he dead?"-in such a voice!

" Much as ever he's 'live," answered the indirect Yankee.

"We see him go in, over to the kiln, and was jest in time; another minnit, the doctor said, an' he'd have been deader 'n a door nail. Put him to bed. doctor says, an' he'll be here in a jiffin'.

So Joe Barber began his New Year in agonies of rheumatic fever, as far from "happy" as a man could be; for if the anguish of body ever gave him a moment's respite the memory of those horrible moments under the cold rush of Mad Brook returned to torture his

For a long year thereafter he was cripple-even when at last he could leave his bed, unable to walk without crutches, and only across his room at that. But all this time, racked with the recollection of her dreadful words, and remorse to think how nearly her wild wish had been granted, Mary Ann nursed him and waited on him with unfailing and gentle patience. She felt that she must atone for her hard speech, though Joe never had alluded to it.

At last the year came round again, and Joe Barber, clothed and in his right mind, sat by the kitchen fire watching his wife pare apples for her Saturday's baking. The children were in the shed cracking nuts, and laughing as children should laugh, but as these two rarely had done, and Mary Ann's face shone with peace and pleasure as she listened to them.

"You look some as though you was a-goin' to hev a happy New Year this time, Mar' Ann," said Joe, in a feeble but gentle voice.

Mary Ann dropped her knife and looked up at him with tears in her eyes. "Oh, Joe! you never will know how happy I was this time last year to have you live, after all! And to think what dreadful words I said to ye, too!" "Sho, sho! Mar' Ann, don't be con-

sarned about 'em; they come back to me there when I was drownin' and done me good-that's so. I wasn't worth hevin', and I know it. Nothin' but the coldwater cure fetched me up in time. I sha'n't never again provoke ye to wrath the way I done before; the Lord helpin', I believe I've begun a real New Year."

Mary Ann lifted the corner of her apron to her eyes and wiped away a tear of joy.
"Well, Joe," she said, in answer,

"let bygones be bygones; we won't twit each other with nothing. You and me and the children will just turn to to-morrer and keep a genuine old-fashioned happy New Year, wou't

"Amen!" said Joe, with all his heart.—Rose Terry Cooke, in Christian

### Beware of Ointments for Catarrh that Contain Mercury,

as mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucus surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do are tenfold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manu-factured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, contains no mercury, and is taken internally, and acts directly upon the blood and mucus surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally, and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co.

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The Christian is like the ripening corn-the riper he grows the more lowly he bends his head.—Guthrie.



plicture of what is taking pince in all parts of the land constantly. The mother goes about from day to day feeling tired, weak, with a bearing down sensation, and get hoping that it is only some passing trouble. After a time her thed feelings increase, her appetite becomes poor, her sleep broken, and her complexies grows sallow. Too often she hopes syminst hope and neglects to take the means in time

One day she becomes faint, her museles grow weak, her head which, and the doctor is hastily summoned. He examines ner, stackes his hearl, haves medicine and grees away. Then paris begin to set in, and after they was a burden before, new secones at agony. Segmentally declines, her pein becomes almost unlearable, and at het she dies, mourned by her children and friends. This is the course of thousehis of once beatty and lampy women. The innomerable format banding to a weakening of organs which must be aroughtened, or health is sure to depart. The overwhelming evidence of the wonderful value of Hunt's Remedy for femile difficulties proves its remarkable power.

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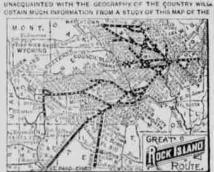
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# Miscellann.

### A Trade in Dog-Skins.

Mr. Edgar, the commissioner of cus-

toms at Newchwang, in Mantchuria, in

the last Chinese Customs Yellow-book, referring to the trade from that port in robes and mats made from the skins of dogs and goats, says it is generally supposed that dogs are picked up promiscuously, wherever they may be found straying, destroyed and their skins sold to dealers. This, however, is not the case, for although the business may have had its origin in this way, it is now as systematically carried on as sheep-farming. There are thousands of small dog and goat-farms dotted over Mantchuria and the eastern borders of Mongolia, where from a score to some hundreds of dogs are annually reared on each farm, and where they constitute a regular source of wealth. A bride, for instance, will re-ceive as dowry a number of dogs proportionate to the means of her father. It is probable, says Mr. Edgar, that in no other part of the world are there to be found s ch splendid dog-skins for size, length of hair and quality, the extreme cold of these latitudes, the thermometer registers 30° Fabren-heit below zero, developing a magnificent coat. It is difficult to understand how the dog-farmer can afford with profit to rear the animals when the price of the robe is taken into consideration. For one full-sized robe-say eighty inches by eighty-six inchesleast eight animals are required. Putting the price realized at fourteen shillings and six pence for a robe, this would only allow one shilling and ten pence per skin, including the selectionfor the skins must match in color and length of hair-and cost of sewing. The animals are generally strangled in midwinter, but not before they are eight months old, and then the skins taken in a frozen condition principally to Muckden and Chinchow, where they are cured, assorted and made into robes, mats, etc. Last year the robes are said to have been decidedly inferior in quality. The reason given is that orders went forward too late, and the farmers, waiting till they had news of some demand, kept the animals alive until their winter coats began to fall The value of the trade from off. Newchwang last year was about £40,-000, against nearly £60,000 the previous year. The decline was due to depreciation in value and a decreased demand from the United States .- London Times.

### The Tobacco Habit.

The New York Medical Journal, after describing the evil effect of nicotine on the system, gives these facts: "In an experimental observation of thirty-eight boys of all classes of society and of average health, who had been using tobacco for periods ranging from two months to two years, twenty-seven showed severe in jury to the constitution and insufficient growth; thirty-two showed the existence of irregularity of the heart's action, disordered stomachs, cough and a craving for alcohol; thirteen had intermittency of the pulse and one had consumption. After they had abandoned the use of tobacco within six months one-half were free from all their former symptoms, and the re-mainder had recovered by the end of the year. A great majority of men go far beyond what may be called the temperate use of tobacco, and evidences of intury are easily found. It is only necessary to have some record of what the general health was previous to the taking up of the habit, and to have observation cover a long enough time. The history of tobacco in the islands of New Zealand furnishes a quite suggestive illustration for our purpose, and one on a large scale. When Europeans first visited New Zealand they found in the native Maoris the most finely-developed and powerful men of any of the tribes inhabiting the islands of the Pacific. Since the introduction of tobacco, for which the Maoris developed a passionate liking, they have from this cause alone, it is said, become decimated in numbers and at the same time reduced in stature and in physical well-being so as to be an altogether inferior type of men." That men who themselves smoke should allow their growing boys to indulge in the habit is a marvel. That men who have sons servation cover a long enough time. growing boys to indulge in the habit is a marvel. That men who have sons and daughters should be willing themselves to smoke is a glaring proof of the weakness and selfishness of human nature, and goes far to prove the doc-trine of total depravity.

# A Story of Lincoln.

Durng the war Miss N., a beautiful and spirited Virginian, whose brother (a confederate soldier) had been taken prisoner by the Union forces, was desirous of obtaining a pass which would enable her to visit him. Francis P. Blair agreed to secure an audience with the president, but warned his young and rather impulsive friend to be very prudent and not let a word escape her which would betray her southern sympathies. They were ushered into the presence of Mr. Lincoln, and the object for which they had come stated. The tall, grave man bent down to the petite maiden, and, looking searchingly into her face, said: "You are loyal, of course?" Her bright eyes flashed. She hesitated a moment, and then, with a face eloquent with emotion and honest as his own, she replied: "Yes, loyal to the heart's core-to Virginia!" Mr. Lincoln kept his intent gaze upon her for a moment longer and then went to his desk, wrote a line or two and handed her the paper. a bow the interview terminated. Once outside, the extreme vexation of Mr. Blair found vent in reproachful words. "Now, you have done it!" he said.
"Didn't I warn you to be very careful? You have only yourself to blame." Miss N. made no reply, but opened the paper. It contained these words: "Pass Miss N.; she is an honest girl and can be trusted. A. Lincoln."

# Wonderful Lake Tahoe.

The waters of Lake Tahoe are marvelously pure—the purest and clearest in the world, I believe. One imagines RARE CHANCE to make money is a that the waters of the river of life can not be more pure. Repeatedly during our long pull I noticed that the water sired. Sure this. Send stamp for particulars.

W. S. S. BUCK, West Randolph, Vi. not be more pure. Repeatedly during our long pull I noticed that the water lifted by and dripping from my oars

had an apparently blue tinge when we were pulling in the ocean blue of very deep water. This blue borrowed the hues of the deep water no less than of the unclouded blue sky above, leading one to believe that it was through a combination of blue water and blue sky that he was moving. If California had no other scenic attracti n but this great inland sea of heavenly clearness of water-deep and blue as the ocean, too-it would not be poor in scenery. The cloud effects on it are marvelous in their ever-changing shapes and various color effects. The effects at Taboe are in their greatest splendor at evening. From the summit of Tallac I have seen rose-flame, yellow, blue-purple and black-purple cloud effects that no painter dare reproduce on canvas without charge of exaggeration. Especially have I seen idle islands of flames set and floating in colorless seas of sky.—San Francisco Bulletin,

### A Black Snake Whipped by Birds.

I had occasion to pass through a part of Mrs. Jones' plantation, the other day, and becoming very tired I seated myself on a stump, and, while sitting there, a black snake came out of the grass to my left and went in great haste about twenty feet into a cotton patch and caught a young partridge. The little bird commenced a pitiful noise and his snakeship was at once attacked by the two parent birds. So vigorous were the pecks and the flopping of the wings that the snake was compelled to loose the young bird and save himself by flight. The grass and weeds were so high that I could not see him after he got into a cornfield near by, but from his maneuvers after the attack his punishment must have been very severe, for from the time he was attacked to the time the cornfield was reached he jumped several times fully as high as his length. The old birds followed him about one hundred yards and then returned to their young. - Greensboro (Georgia) Sun.

### Wallack's Great Memory.

Some time after my father's death I was requested to play Don Caesar, a character he had made peculiarly his own, and of which he was the original in the English language. It was fourteen or fifteen years since I had played it, and I said to Mrs. Wallack, "Before I look at this part again I want you to see if I remember anything of it." not only recollected the words, but I did not miss a syllable. She laid down the book in perfect astonishment. It seemed to come upon me directly, as though I had performed it the night before. This gift of memory has been always of inestimable service to me.-Lester Wallack, in Scribner's.

### Are Your Hens Laying?

Are Your Hens Laying?

It is a fact but little known to people who keep poultry that the first part of a hen which becomes disarranged on the approach of disease is the ovaries, or egg-producing organs. Excess of fat, exposure to wet and cold, poor condition, shedding feathers, improper food, want of exercise or lack of certain elements in the food to develop the embryo egg will all produce the same effect and cause the hens to stop laying. It can not be laid down as an "iron-clad" rule that when a hen ceases laying it is a positive symptom she will soon be sick; but it can be stated with the utmost assurance that something is wrong, or she would not cease laying for weeks and often months. The annual egg product per hen in this country ranges from three to eight dozen each. Now this is by far too small. There is no earthly reason why every hen that lays at all should not be made to lay from ten to fifteen dozen eggs each per year and continue to do so for sweral wears. We ten to fifteen dozen eggs each per year an continue to do so for several years. W know of parties who get eggs at that rate in midwinter in our cold climate. How to get eggs in cold weather interests every

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